

**REMARKS**

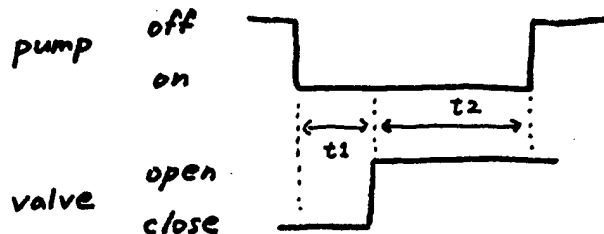
General remarks.

Claims 1-88 are all the claims pending in the application.

All of the claims except for independent claims 5, 69, and 80 (and their respective dependent claims) have been allowed.

Independent claims 5 and 69.

Applicant has amended these claims so as to clarify that: i) the ink flow passage is opened after a first predetermined time period ( $t_1$ ) elapses since the suction pump starts to be driven; and ii) the suction pump is continued to be driven for a predetermined time period ( $t_2$ ) after the ink flow passage is opened (see the explanatory sketch immediately below this paragraph). Claim 71 has been cancelled accordingly, and it is respectfully submitted that the claim amendments contain no impermissible new matter. The amended claims are respectfully submitted still to be generic with respect to the non-elected species.



In rejecting these claims as being anticipated by Terasawa, the Examiner asserted that Terasawa shows the claimed operations of the suction pump and the valve unit with reference to both of Figs. 6 and 8. Applicant respectfully points out that these figures respectively show different embodiments, and therefore they should not be combined, and that any such combination would be impermissible hindsight because Terasawa does not teach any such combination of its embodiments. These rejected claims do not require an air valve, and so the Examiner may properly refer only to Fig. 8 of Terasawa to show Terasawa's teachings regarding the operation timings of the suction pump (Fig. 8D) and the valve unit (Fig. 8E).

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These figures of Terasawa apparently show that the suction pump is driven while the ink flow passage is opened or closed. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Terasawa does not teach or suggest the above described feature clearly recited in claims 5 and 69, as now amended.

In view of the foregoing, and the amendments to independent claims 5 and 69, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner now to allow these independent claims and also their respective dependent claims.

Independent claim 80.

The Examiner rejected independent claim 80 as being unpatentable over Terasawa in view of Wu. This independent claim has been amended so as to recite that the center portion of the diaphragm closes only the exit port of the valve control chamber. The applicant believes that neither Terasawa, nor Wu, nor their combined teachings taken as a whole for what they would have meant to the artisan of ordinary skill, show this feature. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 80, as now amended, patentably distinguishes over the combined teachings of Terasawa and Wu, and therefore now respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 80 and its dependent claims.

Conclusion and request for telephone interview.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

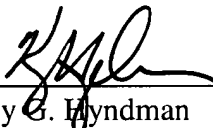
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